CONFIDENTIAL

10 January 1984

SUBJECT: Basic Requirement for Individual Access to CIA/DO
          Information Reports Contained in Computer Data
          Banks Such as DIA/SAFE and CIA/SAFE

Strict adherence to the need-to-know principle as defined
in DCID 1/7 is a fundamental element in good security and an
essential concept which must be applied without compromise.
Need-to-know is defined in DCID 1/7 as "A determination by an
authorized holder of classified information that access to
specific classified material in his or her possession is required
by one or more other persons to perform a specific and officially
authorized function essential to accomplish a national security
task.... In addition to an established 'need-to-know,' a person
must possess an appropriate security clearance and access approv-
als, as required, prior to being provided classified information."

It is quite apparent to us that this directive draws a clear
distinction between "access approval" and "need-to-know" since it
deals with them as two separate stages or steps through which an
individual may have to go to obtain access to classified informa-
tion. The fact that an individual has been given an "access
approval" for communications intelligence or overhead reconnais-
sance material should not entitle or permit access by that indi-
vidual to all available information bearing those "access approval"
code words. Need-to-know for specific subjects or categories of
information must also be demonstrated or be apparent for the indi-
vidual concerned.

25X1
25X1

We are very much aware that over the years there has been a
gradual erosion in libraries, data banks, and other repositories
of intelligence information of efforts to enforce strict need-to-
know access. More and more, largely because it is easier to
administer, access to information data banks has been granted on
the basis of "access controls" and security clearances without
regard to real need-to-know access controls. Some have attempted
to offer the rationalization that if an individual is approved
for the very sensitive "access control" code word information it
must be acceptable that he have access to the entire range of
topics contained in a data base. No matter how many access con-
trol approvals an individual may have, we would argue that there
must be the further demonstrated need-to-know before specific
topical access can be permitted.

25X1

CONFIDENTIAL

d. The extent to which compartmentation controls will be required, in CIRS security stage 1 or later, to limit automatic access on the basis of topical/ geographic need-to-know (defined by original distribution to the office level and retained dissemination controls), as distinct from security clearances and code-word access approvals.